

# TODAY'S SPEECH

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## *Coming in September*

Your retiring Editor cannot tell you what is coming in September — for he himself does not know.

Of course it would be easy to find out. But life contains too little of the pleasantly exhilarating — the mild but titillating psychology of the “grab bag.” Let us not deprive ourselves when we have the chance.

Those of us who know Bill Tacey — the in-coming Editor — need no assurance that the issues for September, and November, and all those to follow under his editorship, will be lively in style, stimulating in point of view, and practical in their helpfulness.

If you have suggestions to make, articles to submit, protests to register — send them to Professor William S. Tacey, Editor of TODAY'S SPEECH, Department of Speech, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Penna.

Speech Is Civilization -- Silence Isolates

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# Speaking Without Notes

by Lionel Crocker

*Dr. Crocker, Head of the Speech Department at Denison University, for many years a leader in the Speech profession, offers practical guidance on a problem of importance to all speakers.*

THE GREAT HUMORIST STEPHEN LEACOCK rolled his audience in the aisles by poking fun at the speaker who is confined to his notes in addressing an audience. He came out on the platform in Hill Auditorium in Ann Arbor with a bushel basket full of scraps of paper which he proceeded to dump on the speaker's stand. He then started to speak, paused, went over to the pile of scraps of paper, rummaged through it, came up with a scrap from the bottom of the heap, looked at it, scratched his head, put it back, and hunted for another scrap. The audience immediately got the point and went into gales of laughter.

Anything that gets in the way of the message of the speaker to the audience is a handicap. There are enough difficulties in the path of communication without deliberately adding to them. The most severe roadblock to response is the manuscript; the next most difficult to overcome is the handful of notes.

Many a speaker would make himself more effective if he would only train himself to throw away his notes. How can this be done?

Of course, there are situations when a manuscript or notes must be used, but these occasions are few and far between. Many speakers use these "helps" because they do not know any better way.

The use of the manuscript or notes on occasions that do not demand them means only one thing, — and that is that the speaker is not fully prepared. The ancients in writing on public speaking included memory as one of the important points on a five point star pointing to success in communication. The other four are: invention, arrangement, style and delivery.

Indifference, laziness, fear are always shouting at the would-be speaker and warning him that he had better use a manuscript or, at least, notes in order to get through the speech situation without making a fool of himself. But, if he yields to this temptation, he cuts down his effectiveness. What-

ever imagined effectiveness a speaker thinks he gains by the use of these crutches, he loses in his fluency and in his contact with his audience. Just when he wants to make a telling point, just when he seems about to thrust home the truth, his eyes dart down at his manuscript or at his notes and the speaker finds himself talking to the desk rather than to the mind and heart of the individual before him.

Let us take a look at how the speaker can train himself to speak without notes. There are four steps in any creative process, from the painting of a picture to the making of a speech. Speaking is a creative process of the highest order and is fraught with all the difficulties of creation.

## I. Getting the Idea

To get ready to speak without notes, plant the idea of your speech in your mind and heart at the earliest opportunity. If you are to speak in three or four months from now, seize upon an idea, a topic, a subject that will seem to you to fit the needs of the occasion and the audience.

Do not wait until a week before you are to speak or the night before you are to speak. Such a practice will prevent the idea from becoming a part of you. The quickie speech will lack depth. The audience will recognize that you have taken the assignment casually and have not given it your best.

Ineffective speakers commit this error.

## II. Thinking Over the Idea

The idea, the topic, the subject, the cause planted in the mind will begin to germinate. Speeches are like trees, they grow. The idea will begin to possess you, and you will begin to possess the idea. By living weeks, even months, with the topic of your speech, you will look at it from many, many angles. At odd moments during your waking hours, and even in your sleep, you will find that



the topic comes up for consideration. At such times, new angles will strike you as relevant to the development of the point you want to make.

Talk over the idea with your friends. Bring up the idea at every conceivable time. Try out the way you phrase the idea.

Henry Ward Beecher declared he never spoke on an idea that had not been a part of his thinking for years.

### III. *Preparing the Idea*

As the time approaches when you are to speak, you will start putting the ideas into form. During the thinking phase, you no doubt have made notes. These notes will be discovered to fall into some sort of pattern. The ideas that belong together will gravitate toward their relatives. Rehearse your speech aloud every day for at least a week.

Gradually, a structure will evolve. Complexity will give way to simplicity. Confusion will give way to order. T. V. Smith in an address on citizenship hung his remarks on three key words: solve, resolve, absolve. No speaker can forget such a simple outline as this. The audience will remember it, too.

President Marion Leroy Burton, one of the University of Michigan's great presidents, who was an extraordinarily effective speaker, used to think over his speeches as he travelled on trains, planes and buses. On his return to the campus, he would dictate his speeches to his secretary. Then he would take this new revision with him on his next trip.

By this process of preparing the idea, certain ways of expressing the thought will evolve. Through repetition these stylistic islands will become memorized and they will spring readily to the lips as one confronts his audience.

In these three processes so far discussed, invention, arrangement, style, and memory have been served. Now comes the test of speaking before the audience, which was the fifth of the categories treated by the ancients.

### IV. *Speaking the Idea*

A speech is not a speech until it is delivered. There must be an audience in the equation. Speaking is a social process. There is a group of people in front of the speaker. These people have come, through one motivation or another, to hear what the speaker has to say. How different from the reader of an article! The reader sits alone in his chair in his corner. He flips through the magazine until an article challenges his fancy. He turns to it and reads; maybe he discontinues reading when the article proves dull. And the writer of the article

may never know who, if anyone, is going to read what he has written. On the other hand, the speaker knows who is going to listen to his speech because they are right in front of him. The writer's creative process ceases when he puts the article in the mail. The creative process for the speaker is still functioning when he takes his position before the audience.

Adaptation! Ah, there is a word for the speaker to conjure with. Notes stand in the way of adaptation.

Adaptation to the group in front of him is a part of the process of speaking. In preparing the message, the speaker may have imagined who will be in front of him, but now he knows. It may have turned out to be a rainy night and only a few have showed. Ingersoll faced such an audience in Terre Haute; ah, but Eugene Debs was in the audience! Ingersoll adapted his address to his small audience. He returned the fee he was supposed to receive. He captured Eugene Debs. Young Eugene accompanied Robert Ingersoll back to Indianapolis after the lecture just to be near him. The speaker must be prepared for all sorts of emergencies and audiences, and he can not do this if he is encumbered with notes or a manuscript. Imagine Ingersoll using notes!

One lecturer, thinking he was going to speak to a group of teen-agers and college students, had worked out a talk on, "To You I Throw the Torch." But on arriving at the auditorium, he discovered that the audience was composed of middle-aged and senior citizens. Now, if a speaker insists on going ahead in such a case with his prepared manuscript or notes, he is only kidding himself if he thinks he is effective. Adapt so that you may become adept.

To be effective as a speaker, everything must combine to make something happen in the audience. The audience is an integral part of the speaking situation. They must take part. If the audience is ignored and the speaker addresses his notes, he has failed. There must be a response.

It is in the process of adaptation that we find the difficulties of the public speaking situation. If any speaker imagines that the process of public speaking is easy, he just does not know what effectiveness on the platform really is. For example, suppose another speaker has developed one of your ideas in his talk, will you willy nilly go ahead with your notes and repeat what he has said? Or, will you be nimble witted enough to drop the already expressed material from your speech?

(Continued on page 8)



# HOW TO MAKE A SPEECH

by Milton J. Wiksell

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YOU HAVE NO DOUBT HEARD SUCH COMMENTS AS: "I couldn't quite understand what he meant," "He seemed unenthusiastic," "He was argumentative," "There was something odd about the way he said that," "Would the man please come to the point," "He bores me to death," and so on ad infinitum! These reactions reflect but a few of the common faults of speech.

A study made by Lull, Funk, and Piersol shows that the majority of corporation presidents agree that the effectiveness of management personnel is greatly dependent upon ability in oral communication.

How best can an individual improve this ability?

## PLAN TO IMPROVE YOUR SPEECH

First, I would recommend joining a group interested in forming a speech class. There is no substitute for practice before a sympathetic audience, and that you have in the average speech class. In addition to practicing before a stimulating group, you have the advice of a professional speech teacher. Without such supervision, your mistakes may develop into fixed habits.

Remember that speech cannot be learned in 20 easy lessons, but that is something you must constantly improve upon from the cradle to the grave. So don't expect an immediate transformation in your speech habits.

## THINGS YOU CAN DO

If you are concerned with improving your speech, consider continuation classes in speech and seize every opportunity, no matter how insignificant, to speak to others. This means putting into practice in your daily conversations, interviews, telephone calls, business meetings, and conferences what your instructor has advised you to do.

Individual coaching has proved highly successful in the annual Graduate Savings and Loan Institute held each summer at Indiana University. Here speech teachers meet with every senior for one hour to evaluate his speaking. In addition to this special assistance, the program recommends that

all students take two classes in speech during their other two summer sessions.

Or you might explore the following:

- 1) The purchase of an inexpensive tape recorder with which to analyze your own speech.
- 2) The purchase of a speech book and subscription to a speech magazine which are written by well qualified academic authorities.
- 3) Speaking as often as you can before groups of people and requesting their evaluations.

## YOU BECOME MORE EFFICIENT

But you say you are not especially interested in public speaking and may never have to give a formal speech. But you never know! Even so, the principles taught you in speech courses have a direct bearing on conversation, discussion, clarity of thought, giving instructions, conference procedure, interviewing, persuasive announcements, telephone calls, and even written communications!

No business or professional man can function at his fullest capacity with inferior speech habits. This is as true for those who are engaged in administrative duties as it is for the employees. The kind of speaking both do can make an enormous difference in selling services and products and in making for efficiency and good will.

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD SPEECH?

What are some basic requisites of good speech? I cannot list them all here, but foremost is the ability to get your point across in an appropriate manner. If, when you have finished speaking, your listener has the feeling that he understands, that he is moved to do something, that he is convinced or stimulated, and that he is very much interested and sold on your plans, you are on the right track!

How can you make a more convincing speech? First, the choice of the specific phase of a subject must be of special interest to your audience. Secondly, you should have many direct experiences with your speech topic, as well as much source material.

Consider in planning your discourse that we are often, as Woodrow Wilson said, guided more by the emotional than by the logical appeal. As human beings, we are prone to look with interest upon such human wants as self-preservation, security, savings, health, justice, well being, time and labor-saving devices, pride of ownership, and many other such desires. Appeal to these factors of human concern and almost anyone will take notice.

Your speech — which should be brief — must have numerous logical ideas, for we also deal with the intellect. After several years of teaching oral English to engineers in an eastern university, I came to the conclusion that reducing technical material to the layman's comprehension was their biggest hurdle. Therefore, make use of concrete examples, simplicity in language, simplified statistics, round numbers, restatement, rhetorical questions, reasoning, authoritative quotations, and personal illustrations. A liberal sprinkling of the latter two items will do much to carry the speech.

#### USE NUMEROUS VISUAL AIDS

I do not believe there is a better way to explain a project than to supply the listeners with numerous visual aids. If we accept the statement, "seeing is believing," then surely we ought to utilize every means to appeal to the sense of sight. The possibilities are numerous. Included are actual objects, demonstrations, models, films, slides, maps, pictures, documents, blackboard, charts, and other graphic material.

In more recent times, startling effects have been achieved by using the flannel board, flip charts, and strip boards upon which blank papers are torn off to reveal the material as the speaker approaches that particular point. Perhaps the most elaborate method is a system of charts which are made to come into view by push button.

Many times, these useful forms of visual illustrations are lacking. Too often, only one visual aid is used when more could strengthen the presentation. The most impressive speech I ever heard an engineering student deliver was over 15 years ago. He made use of many of the above mentioned visual aids. Since that time, I have heard thousands of speeches in my classes and elsewhere, and obviously if I can remember this particular one, it must have been outstanding.

Visual devices are an effective means to hold interest and increase understanding. But they must be employed properly. Above all, plan to display charts, drawings, or pictures that are large enough to be seen at a distance. Dark colors are better than light ones to represent areas, lines, or printed commentary.

Secondly, present attractive visual aids and place them in front and center on a rack high enough so that everyone can see. You'd be surprised how often speakers place the chart far to one side or tape it to the front table.

A common error is to become so engrossed with the visual materials that the interests of the audience are overlooked. I have often observed the speaker facing and addressing his "conversation" to the pictured materials. Besides blocking the view of many in the audience, the speaker loses the opportunity to project his remarks and maintain proper audience contact.

To overcome these mistakes, a pointed stick is useful to indicate the exact object under consideration and avoid obstructing the view.

Study the visual aids carefully before giving the speech. Figures or other data on the charts will then be so well in mind that, with the exception of a few swift glances you can continue concentrating on the audience.

#### BE WORTHY TO SPEAK

In preparing a speech, be careful not to overlook the ethical aspects. People want to believe in you, want to be shown, and expect sound statements of fact. If there are any weaknesses or doubtful items in your case, you should be prepared to admit them. You could then counter with more advantages for your viewpoint and thus compensate for any deficiencies.

It is obvious that much more material than you'll ever need should be at your command. If you do not have the time to say all that you intended, you'll please the audience by giving them the impression that you could have said much more.

#### ORGANIZE YOUR SPEECH CAREFULLY

After collecting the raw materials from various recognized sources for your speech, there remains the problem of organization. A speech or conversation which is structurally weak is incoherent, and the purpose of the discourse may be lost. Do as the late Franklin D. Roosevelt, a master speaker, did — pick the issues which stand out and use them as your chief line of attack.

Choose the most potent one from the two or three main divisions of thought (more would likely confuse and bore the audience) and present it as your first issue. A vital point at the beginning of the body of your speech grips the listener, and you can repeat it for effect, as Churchill strongly recommends.

Also keep in mind that enumerating these issues in the speech helps to clarify the various ideas and keeps the whole structure in proper focus.

Perhaps this advice sounds like hard work — and it is. But this is the path to effective speaking.

After the body of the speech has been planned, the opening and closing remarks may be formulated. In most instances it is advisable not to blurt into your subject immediately. Otherwise, you would find your best salesman asking you to buy his product in his opening comment.

Brief and tactful references of an impromptu or "on the spur of the moment" nature relative to something which has just occurred pleases the audience. You may refer to the reason for the discussion. The introduction of rhetorical questions which lead up to your topic is an excellent attention getting device. Humorous remarks relating to the speech topic may be used if they are in good taste. You are speaking to win favorable responses, so be certain no remarks have cause to offend.

Following your attention-getting material, you must plan to state clearly and concisely your topic for discussion. Here you can point it up by utilizing a slower rate and an increased volume. The importance of emphasizing your topic cannot be overestimated. In many of my own executive speech classes, student evaluations have revealed differences of opinion as to the specific purpose of the speaker! I strongly recommend the repetition or restatement of this key purpose several times in the speech to keep the listeners oriented. Leave no doubt at any time as to your objective.

In preparing your concluding statements, be aware of the fact that you can tie up loose ends here by simply summarizing the whole speech. Better yet is a brief re-statement of the ideas in different terminology.

A straightforward appeal to the future application of the solution to your problem, or for action, belief, and understanding are other ways to bring the speech to a close. In the formal types of address, use poems, dramatized illustrations, epitomes, and quotations.

#### SPEAK EXTEMPORANEOUSLY

Your speech is now planned, but we must not overlook the delivery of it. Very few people tolerate canned speeches or those which are read aloud. I have in mind recent critical remarks at an Institute which went like these: "Why does Mr. H. 'read' his paper every year? He is good, but the reading is rotten." Another wrote this evaluation: "I was disappointed to see so many papers read instead of delivered from notes."

Practicing aloud in your room to avoid such disastrous effects will make for a better presentation. People expect a direct gaze, so go over your

speech again and again extemporaneously. If you need exactitude, you can quote verbatim if the passage is short. But you must do so in a conversational way, looking up from the printed page as often as possible. For the rest of your speech, plan to use small 3 x 5 cards for easy reference to key phrases.

#### DON'T MUMBLE, RACE, OR DRAG

Often, a man knows his subject thoroughly but fails miserably in putting it across. In your practice sessions rely heavily on the use of a tape recorder. Ask someone to evaluate your performance. Even if this person doesn't know all the speech techniques, you and he will spot many weaknesses as you listen to the playbacks.

Therefore, be careful to utter the sounds so that what you say may be readily understood. This means the energetic and flexible use of the lips, teeth, tongue, and jaws.

Next, keep in mind that variation of tone, pitch, rate, and volume make is possible to convey more meaning and arouse more interest. If a person fails in these aspects of delivery, he runs the risk of being a bore!

#### WORK TO IMPROVE YOUR FAULTS

Let us suppose that you have a slow, tiresome rate of speech. For this particular fault, I would advise that you make a determined effort to speak doubly fast in daily conversation. You'll be amazed what this consistent effort can do for your speech.

If you have no volume changes in your speech, pick out the salient features of your discourse and speak them with some increase in force.

You can do something for a monotone by attempting to project your own feelings as you say something. If you are pleased, show it in your tone of voice.

#### CULTIVATE GESTURES

A second phase of delivery deals with bodily action. The adage, actions speak louder than words, still holds true, so in general cultivate the proper visible impressions.

I believe it pays dividends to show enthusiasm in your facial expressions and actions. A friend of mine in Maryland once told me that his success in the professional world greatly depended on the good will of his fellow men. He attributed much of his achievement to his own friendliness with people. "It doesn't cost anything to smile," he once said. Another friend told me that he is exposed to numerous problems brought to him by his subordinates, colleagues and others. It seems appreciated, he notices, if he displays a sympathetic and



tactful attitude in return, instead of mere non-chalance.

Likewise, audiences expect you to reveal in your face and actions how you, personally, feel about your subject. If you fail here, you are contradicting yourself.

#### PUT ON SOME STEAM

You might wonder how much spontaneity, animation, and projection to use. This depends on the size of the room and the nature of the meeting or the communication. Ordinarily, many people are sadly lacking in this department. I have heard such a reaction as, "Can't the man be much more aggressive and energetic in his style?" So, you see, it is expected of you to put forth some steam. Some may look upon those who do this as natural born speakers, gifted in the art. But Hoyt Kelley, one of the best speakers I ever helped train in my business and professional speech courses, informed me that when he is finished giving a speech — and he gives numerous ones in California — he is more exhausted than if he had played a game of football! And his colleagues thought it looked so easy!

If, when you have finished these methods of planning a speech, you feel apprehensive about giving it before the board meeting, or any other audience, remember that fear is a normal occurrence among even the top-notch speakers. Some have said that you don't deliver a good speech without it. The best way to ease the feeling is thorough preparation and speaking as often as you can before others. Act natural. Be yourself. Then, by appearing to enjoy the speech, you can be effective!

#### SPEAKING WITHOUT NOTES

(Continued from page 4)

In conclusion, let us enumerate some of the suggestions that emerge from this discussion of speaking without notes.

1. Speaking without notes is the most difficult way of speaking in public.
2. Say your ideas out loud every day.
3. Jot down random ideas.
4. Be frank with the audience. Look! No notes!
5. Do not prepare the speech the night before.
6. Let the speech reflect your personal thought life.

#### 25 POINTS TO REMEMBER

##### Preparation:

1. Choose a specific phase of a subject of special interest to your audience.
2. Be sure you have had direct experience with your subject.
3. Collect more raw material than you can use.
4. Organize the material in two or three main divisions so that the structure is strong. Start with the strongest division.
5. Open with interest, close with satisfaction.
6. Appeal to human wants and concerns.
7. Include numerous logical ideas.
8. Use concrete examples.
9. Use simplicity in language.
10. Use simplified statistics.
11. Use repetition.
12. Use rhetorical questions.
13. Use logical reasoning.
14. Use authoritative quotations.
15. Use personal illustrations.
16. Use adequate visual aids.
17. Be brief.

##### Delivery:

18. Practice aloud over and over.
19. Don't mumble, race, or drag.
20. Vary tone, pitch, rate, and volume.
21. Work to improve your faults.
22. Use proper gestures.
23. Use small note cards; gaze directly at audience.
24. Gear your delivery to size of the room, nature of the meeting.
25. Be friendly, act natural, smile.

7. Do not say anything you do not believe to be true.
8. Keep physically well so the nervous demands of the platform do not get you down.
9. Be sure you have a simple plan built around key words.
10. Think in terms of pictures.
11. Be ready to meet the demands of the occasion.
12. Be receptive to new ideas on the platform.
13. Never expect to be 100% effective.
14. Get a response from the audience.
15. Expect success.
16. Adapt! Adapt! Adapt!

# Fostering Group Thinking

by John K. Brilhart

Mr. Brilhart is Instructor in Speech, Penn State, and consultant on research in discussion to the Center for Continuing Education.

HANG ON TIGHT NOW. We're going around a curve. This was no wild ride in an M.G. or Porsche, but a deliberate break in the sequence of a discussion. Ten persons had been reacting to each other's comments about a set of readings on the topic, "Status and Role." In one swoop they were taken from an exploration of the conflicting roles of a contemporary African chieftain to the curve-maker's troubles with a trucking union. This particular study-discussion group did not get back to the readings on role and status.

Quite different was a discussion in which eighteen adults were analyzing two of E. E. Cummings' poems. Although the talk was excited, enthusiastic and spontaneous, most of the statements were clear and interrelated. One discussant explained the picture he thought the poet wanted to convey in a line. A second speaker added some further interpretations. The third man explained why he disagreed somewhat. Nods followed from various people around the room. A fourth participant added his views on the next stanza. The discussion leader asked if there was anything in the poem to support this interpretation. The prior speaker began to explain, then stopped, only to begin again with, "Now I see what you mean." On and on went the group, sharing in a gradual unfolding of the poem. At last one speaker attempted a synthesis of the many varying points which had been advanced. As the discussion closed the members spoke of how much fun they had been having and of how much better they now understood and appreciated the poem.

Examples such as these illustrate several differences between discussion groups — differences which illuminate the concept of *group thinking*. In the one case the talk was scattered, inchoate, leading nowhere; in the other instance the talk was lucid, easy to follow, and fruitful of understandings. In the one case the discussion sounded like an undisciplined train of free associations; in the other the statements resembled the workings of a trained, controlled mind.

Group thinking which occurs during a discussion has been described in many previous books

and articles. Considerable disagreement has occurred over the usage of the term. This article does not enter into the controversies which have arisen, but merely describes some salient features which I have detected in certain groups where satisfaction was high and in which goals were pursued with much dispatch and success. As Keltner has pointed out, thinking in the context of a group is still a process which occurs within the nervous system of an individual, not in the group in some suprapersonal way.<sup>1</sup> Yet the oft-used term "group thinking" certainly must refer to something more than a collection of individuals thinking clearly and communicating about a shared subject or problem in an atmosphere characterized by cohesiveness and honest clash of opinion. All these factors are needed if the individual thinkers are to form a *thinking group*, but these ingredients are only a part of the prerequisites for *group thinking*.

## PROMOTIVELY INTERDEPENDENT THINKING

When "thinking" in the group context is so channelled that each member of the group attends, understands, digests, and utilizes all that he can of each other member's statements in advancing the group toward some mutually accepted goal, whether or not one chooses to call this occurrence "group thinking," we could say that a sort of *promotively interdependent thinking* has occurred. The bulk of the statements and sub-vocal reactions of the group members are dovetailed: each is related to, built upon, and to some degree assimilates what has gone before. The discussion is directed toward the discovery of common ends and of mutually acceptable means to those goals. In such a discussion we have many individual minds attuned like the players in a jam session, each contributing to the total effect, not knowing in advance how he will proceed, catching his cues from and building on what his fellows are doing.

Many — far too many — discussions might well be described as disjointed conglomerations of statements beset by attempts to confuse, confound, and

<sup>1</sup> " 'Groupthink' and Individual Thinking," *Today's Speech*, V (April, 1957), 5-6.

confute. The "promotively interdependent" discussion is one in which the statement of one discussant promotes, stimulates, and focuses the reaction of the next. Each speaker uses what has gone before to promote the entire group toward a commonly accepted destination. Thinking by one member seems to induce thinking by each other member, a sort of interaction which builds spiralwise until the common problem has been defined, the recall of available knowledge promoted, and each person finds personal achievement in group achievement.

Such group thinking does *not* result merely from following rules of logic or some rigorous predetermined outline. Neither does such promotively interdependent thinking *require* a group whose members are trained in the elements of critical thinking as advanced in college texts (I do not mean to say that such training will not help). Group procedure need not be projected and closely controlled by one member (*the leader*). Nor is such thinking by group members necessarily the result of teaching discussion techniques. Training in discussion techniques, some procedural control, and an understanding of the modes of critical thinking can contribute much to intellectual teamwork if other necessary conditions exist. Others have written most extensively about techniques, control, and reasoning. My purpose here is to describe some of the conditions necessary to promotively interdependent thinking. What are these conditions? How can they be fostered?

#### EARMARKS OF PROMOTIVELY INTERDEPENDENT THINKING

First and most important, I have observed a spontaneous, enthusiastic participation evidencing interest and involvement in the topic, poem, or problem being discussed. There is no forcing of interest because that is "the right way to participate," no wandering of attention, no yawning or droopy-eyed slouching. These discussants act as if the subject, or problem, is all-engrossing. They seem to be unable not to attend to what others are saying. Just as a hungry man will be fascinated by a steak dinner, then seek to ingest it, chew it up, and assimilate that which is good for him, so do these discussants find themselves compelled from within to listen, eager to catch each statement, mull it over, retain the usable and reject the useless. *In each case the focussed attention and participation grows out of a spontaneous interest, need, want.* The person makes an aggressive, enthusiastic attack on the elements of his momentary environment which stand out in sharp detail against the hazy background of stimuli of which he is less aware because they matter less to him.

Such interest and attention cannot be directly taught or forced. Personal involvement proceeds from within outward. For "group" thinking to occur the discussion must take place among people who share a keen interest, need, or enthusiasm. Too often our groups have no *raison d'être*, or lose sight of that commonality. Eight starving people might readily think together about how to catch a turkey. Eight well-fed people would be less likely to do so. If we as leaders or chairmen or teachers dictate the topics, problems, or other items on an agenda (I recognize that this sometimes may be necessary), we may expect a discussion which lacks the excitement of promotively interdependent thinking unless we have been clairvoyant in predicting the shared interests and interdependent needs of group members. As discussion leaders we would be advised to discover and practice every known method of group agenda-building and planning.

Perhaps we can teach people to be more aware of their environments as a means of fostering promotively interdependent thinking. Exercises in observing, challenges to notice details, and a pointing out of unique differences between similar objects, accompanied by great personal enthusiasm on the part of the teacher, will do more to promote group thinking than some instruction in discussion "methodology." I have seen groups of skeptics become fascinated explorers discussing modern painting after two or three hours in which they were guided into close contact with reproductions of the paintings. The increase in awareness, of contact with the paintings, seemed to foster a much higher quality of group thinking.

Another characteristic of groups displaying promotively interdependent thinking is humility. This "humility" is closely akin to spontaneous interest and keen awareness of detail. Such humility is not mealy-mouthed, afraid to express an explicit opinion, but can be described as an attitude which seems to say that "others are also reacting and may have something to offer which will increase my understanding or perhaps even change my beliefs." In a discussion marked by this "humility" even the firmest affirmation seems to carry with it (if only by tone, inflection, or facial expression) a question — "but how do you see it?" Close, careful listening occurs. People restate each other's views. The close observer will often detect a slightly open mouth, a nodding head, a stroked chin, upturned eyes — signs of intense effort to recreate as closely as possible the meanings of the speaker. The humility of the open mind which *seeks* to capture knowledge from any source at any time, which can assert strongly but accept almost as easily, seems to be a



dominant attitude when promotively interdependent thinking occurs.

An emphasis on external realities characterizes the individuals engaged in promotively interdependent thinking. They tend to talk about abstract problems in terms of observable events. If the talk is about family life, an actual family or families provide a common body of information, a shared base for the group of minds. In the specific case, or "for instance," both professional and novitiate can find some interest, so may build a discussion in which the viewpoint of each is fresh and stimulating to the other. *Actuality*, provided by the detail of a *specific* problem, poem, reading, or case, usually is present when promotively interdependent thinking occurs. Words in such an instance are not far removed from things. As Benne said:<sup>2</sup>

A group of people cannot think together until they are perceiving a common situation, until they are reacting to a commonly felt difficulty, until they have constructed and selected a common problem. . . . The conclusion seems to be that a collection of people cannot be rational about a common problem until they have grown into a group which in some measure sees and values alike, because without such group growth no common problem exists.

Benne proceeded to explain the importance of rationally settling relationship problems which arise in the group as a means to such group. However, here the focus is on the common perception.

Closely reasoned statements and critical comments are typical of promotively interdependent thinking. Often the discussion sounds like the probings of a trained mind exploring the possible approaches to a problem. Such related thinking indicates that although the close focus of the discussants is largely due to spontaneous interest in the group-generated problem or topic, the individual thinker is being guided by a built-in logic. The reflective thought sequence, a "scientific" attitude or logic, are often evident in the flow of talk of decision-making groups which display a high degree of promotively interdependent thinking. This sequence in such cases does not seem to be imposed by the leader, but emerges from the group. The course in discussion may greatly help a person learn to mesh his mind with the minds of others when a decision is to be made by helping him to learn a common pattern of thinking. Group members can and must learn to think in a pattern if interdependent thinking is to occur.

<sup>2</sup> Kenneth D. Benne, "Group Dynamics' and the Conditions of Rationality in Judgment," *Educational Forum*, XVI (November, 1951), 51.

Successful group thinking is frequently characterized by a sort of creative imagination, insight, or what one writer called "cooking with gas." Several group members make comments, each of which adds some new item of information, possible approach, or bit of interpretation. Suddenly an insight occurs to one member who can then synthesize the prior remarks into a new whole. At this stage group thinking has reached a climax in which group members seem to all share. Smiles, excited talking about the creation, and mutual congratulations are among other signs of satisfaction. Thus the creative process occurs in a group, yielding a new arrangement of elements taken from many prior statements; this seems to be quite similar to what occurs when an individual solves a difficult problem or "creates."

Such successful group thinking frequently gives rise to increased group cohesion. This might be called the goal of group thinking, yet it occurs only infrequently.<sup>3</sup> If participants have learned to listen carefully and to think imaginatively, dissecting each other's statements and recombining them in fanciful new ways, this creativity may occur. But fascination with the topic or problem is more necessary than any training in formal logic or such techniques as questioning or linear summarizing.

Promotively interdependent thinking can occur only when group members are freed from other and greater concerns. One can hardly mesh his mind in group effort if he is plagued by a fear of reprisal from any other member or if he must show himself a superior person to the eyes of other persons in the group. Hidden agendas, the struggle for status, the need for acclaim, work against group thinking. Unless and until members of a group accept each other *vis-a-vis* without jockeying for power and without strong interpersonal emotional overtones, promotively interdependent thinking cannot occur. Although relationship problems and conflicts of value need not exist in a group of healthy, critical, imaginative, and keenly interested persons, such individuals and groups may be rather rare.

So long as one person fears ridicule or attack from another he cannot fully engage in group thinking. One who must continually receive praise or recognition will not often be able to blend himself into the group. One who rejects himself and cannot let himself be a peer to others is not likely to engage in group thinking. Nor can two or more

(Continued on page 19)

<sup>3</sup> Lee says that of the over 200 groups which he observed, on only sixteen occasions were the people so stimulated by their discussion that they wanted to keep talking. Irving J. Lee, *How to Talk with People*, Harper, 1952, pp. 121-122

## ADLAI E. STEVENSON:

# Part II: Stevenson and His Audience

by Richard Murphy

*This is the second and concluding essay on Stevenson. Part I, published in the February issue, was titled "Stevenson as Spokesman." Mr. Murphy is Professor of Speech, University of Illinois, and editor of The Quarterly Journal of Speech.*

ADLAI STEVENSON SPOKE to his first national audience on the hustings of 1952, when he ran for President. On his second attempt, in 1956, he again appeared as candidate, soliciting the support of the millions, and again was quantitatively rejected. But Stevenson's public is something more than a quadrennial electorate. Through his lectures and writings he has been in rapport with a vast audience which regards him not merely as a candidate for something, but as a spokesman on public affairs. Since 1952, five volumes of his speeches have been published, and a sixth<sup>1</sup> has been announced. His reports on affairs here and abroad have been syndicated by newspapers, issued by picture magazines—Look in America and Picture Post in Britain—and published by such erudite journals as *Centennial Review of Arts and Sciences* and *Foreign Affairs*. A study of Stevenson's relations with his audience is a tantalizing affair and involves many speculations. But since it concerns what is supposed to be fundamental in democracy—but is actually a rarity—a spokesman's attempts to reason ideas and values with his audience, it is worth attempting.

It is the vogue nowadays to speak learnedly of myths, and myth patterns, of folkloristic images, and to study speakers, as one savant has done, in terms of "mythological status in public life." What is the Stevenson image? In making the refraction, more of the American public than of Stevenson may be revealed.

One thinks first of the egg. "Via ovicupitum dura est," said Stevenson in his first Godkin lecture at Harvard in 1954, "The way of the egghead is hard."<sup>2</sup> He is an egghead, and candles AA fresh, jumbo. There have been other eggheads, of course. Thomas Jefferson was one, and being an Anglo-Saxon scholar, would have known that egg is from the old English, *heafod*. But men of intelligence

and learning were held in some esteem in the eighteenth century. Theodore Roosevelt was an egghead, until his later years when hatred of Wilson consumed him; but he was so busy busting brones and trusts, and shooting lions, the public was not so aware that he wrote a five-foot shelf of books and was president of the American Historical Society. Woodrow Wilson was an egghead, and paid for it with his life. But Stevenson even looks like an egghead. He appeals to the intellectuals. Will someone versed in images then explain why, according to the sample of social science professors reported by Lazarsfeld and Thielens in *The Academic Mind*,<sup>3</sup> the professors voted 68% for Truman, but only 59% for Stevenson? Or why in samples from Catholic colleges the drop from Truman was 67% to 47%, and in teachers colleges, from 60% to 49%?

He is an earnest student, reads reports instead of relying on briefing, travels widely, but not in processional, and makes his own observations.

He is not popular, it is said. "I don't know why it is," says the voter who votes for him, "but he is not popular"—27,000,000 votes in 1952, 3,000,000 more than the successful Mr. Truman got the election before, but he is not popular. He came within 10% of equaling the most publicized, the most mass-communicated candidate in American political history, but he is not popular. To some degree he does lack the common touch. I have seen him on the campaign train, tolerating the handshaking and the picture-taking with local politicians between whistle-stops, but obviously eager to get back to his MSS. He confessed to Eleanor Roosevelt that he is not so much at home in talking to people as she is. She advised him to get a small automobile and travel leisurely in various sections of the country, talking with people, always accompanied by someone of the region as interlocutor, "until you can feel what they are

<sup>1</sup> *Putting First Things First* (announced for publication in March by Random House).

<sup>2</sup> *Adlai E. Stevenson, Call to Greatness* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), p. xi.

<sup>3</sup> Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Wagner Thielens, Jr., *The Academic Mind* (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1958), p. 28.

feeling."<sup>4</sup> This advice, she sadly notes, was not followed. The truth is, I think, that Stevenson meets people well enough when they have something to say, but he does not enjoy sheer chit-chat and backslapping, especially when there are speeches to be prepared.

He is a clever man, with a razor wit, a sense of comedy in Meredith definition, able to laugh at himself and at the people and ideas he loves. "I am accused of talking over people's heads," he says as he stands on a high platform. "This time I must admit it is true." In his not recorded but much circulated — in various mimeographed versions — Gridiron speech of 1952,<sup>5</sup> he laughed at the "Good old Ad-lie" greetings he had received, and advised the newsmen, if they had an unusual name, either to change it or accept usage without complaint.

He knows much of the world, has traveled in it since childhood, and is regarded highly abroad. He is an internationalist from the heart of isolationism, midwest America.

He is an apprehensive man, hoping for the best, fearing the worst, anticipating rebuttal in his positive statements,<sup>6</sup> dispensing good cheer before, during and after his Jeremiads. He is said to be a rather indecisive man, a cross between a precinct committeeman and a college professor, not quite knowing whether this day he should run for President or have his shoes resoled.

This, then, is the Stevenson image which has been rejected for what we are told is the father image. Clearly he is not the father, he is not even the son, although he may somewhat resemble the holy<sup>7</sup> . . . but let us not press this; Stevenson is a Unitarian.

The image of Stevenson cannot be communicated in a word. It is not the same for all people. He is too complex an individual to be so projected. Therein lies one of his difficulties, or one of his strengths.

But enough of images. Let us look at some of the facts. In the matter of Mr. Stevenson's "indecisiveness," what is the situation? In 1952, he simply did not want to run for President. He was in his first term as governor of Illinois, and was running for reelection. He had committed himself; he had a program to carry on. His reluctance to

be drafted came not from coyness but a determination to do what he thought was his duty. In 1953 he began his campaign for 1956, and there was no doubt about it. He entered the primaries and toured the nation. He worked intensively, not in lining up delegates, but in preparing himself for the job. The story of his seminars, his files of materials, his consultations with experts in the problem fields, has been told by Professor Windes in the February *Quarterly Journal of Speech*.<sup>8</sup> As the campaign for 1960 got under way in late 1959, Mr. Stevenson avoided involvement; he does not care to be a perennial office seeker. Consistent with his policy of being informed, he went to Latin America — which he considers an increasing problem area for the United States — and left Kennedy, Humphrey, Symington, Johnson, et al., to make their kick-offs. But there is no doubt he is on call if needed.

There is the question of why Stevenson did less well in 1956 than in 1952, losing by 9,000,000 votes rather than the former 6,000,000. Many studies have been made of his rhetoric to explain this relapse. Professor Beattie<sup>9</sup> ran a Flesch Readability Formula test on Stevenson's 1956 speeches and found them 5.8 points higher than the 1952 speeches in *mean reading ease*, but the *human interest* score 4.7 points lower. The general impression is that Stevenson's speaking was less effective in 1956 than in 1952.

There are more obvious, if not more satisfactory explanations of the 1952-56 comparisons. In '52 Stevenson was unknown, but drafted. He had a freshness, a novelty, a wit, an unstudied enthusiasm. His campaign was run by amateurs. In 1956 he had pondered and studied his role, and was in the hands of the old pros. He was worn down by the primary fights in the states. He made in nine months 300 speeches and travelled 15,000 miles. With his desire to avoid repetition, he slaved at new speeches, and in his desire to be obliging, he spent his energies on little, local groups, and had to face the larger groups or the television audience in a state of fatigue. These elements might explain the difference.

But there is an even more obvious explanation; he was running against Mr. Eisenhower, whose magic for being associated with all that is good, and disassociated from anything troublesome, had been demonstrated for four years. Two of Stevenson's major issues blew up like the trick cigars he sometimes refers to. One, the appeal for stop-

<sup>4</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt, "On My Own," *The Saturday Evening Post*, CCXXX (March 8, 1958), 33.

<sup>5</sup> Gridiron Club Dinner, Washington, D. C., December 13, 1952. By tradition these speeches are not reported, but I have seen two mimeographed versions of Stevenson's speech.

<sup>6</sup> Noel F. Busch, *Adlai E. Stevenson of Illinois* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1952), p. 143. See the veto of the [loyalty oaths] Broyles Bills — "I know full well that this veto will be distorted and misunderstood."

<sup>7</sup> See the cover of *Newsweek* (January 11, 1960), and the title, "The Lively Ghost: Adlai Stevenson."

<sup>8</sup> Russell Windes, Jr., "Adlai E. Stevenson's Speech Staff in the 1956 Campaign," *QJS*, XLVI (February, 1960), 32-43.

<sup>9</sup> William E. Beattie, "A Readability-Listenability Analysis of Selected Campaign Speeches of Adlai E. Stevenson in the 1952 and 1956 Presidential Campaigns," *Central States Speech Journal*, X (Spring, 1959), 16-18.



ping nuclear tests, was promptly endorsed by Russia, and that was the end of that—the kiss of death. The other issue, getting rid of the draft, was developed, and then came Suez and the explosions in the Middle East. After Stevenson's amateurish tinkering with a world in eruption, it was rather comforting to know that we already had in the White House the world's greatest living military authority, who was willing to stay on.

Every man has his idea of what gets votes. One advertising man<sup>10</sup> claims that if Stevenson had had that million and a half dollars for those twenty-second spot announcements his opponent had in 1952, he would have been elected. What the influence of speaking may be in a campaign, we simply do not know. Much of our rhetorical study is based on a static concept that if, in some way, one can well select, arrange and deliver his materials he will succeed. But the world, and especially these days, is a dynamic, changing scene, and despite our progress, people have not entirely overcome their immutability to new ideas. Then there are the vagaries of existence; one little sputnik in the sky can ruin the best Ciceronian *inventio*, *dispositio* and *elocutio*. Evidently candidates regard speeches as important, else they would not half-kill themselves making them. But it is one of the ironies of the Stevenson campaigns that while he sweated over his manuscripts, polished his metaphors, and spoke in some doubt of his final effort, his opponent in deep conviction read from the papers before him, or gaily extemporized without the slightest sensitivity to syntax.

So far as Stevenson's popular appeal goes, he has been dogged by ill luck. He was hardly settled in the Governor's Mansion when his wife asked for separation, and then received an uncontested divorce. There was no scandal involved. As Kenneth S. Davis puts it in his biography of Stevenson, *A Prophet in His Own Country*,<sup>11</sup> Mrs. Stevenson preferred her world of poetry and fine arts to politics. But in these neo-Victorian days when the consort must be seen from the bubbletop to assure the populace that God's in His Heaven, all's right with the world, absence of a wife is a handicap. Stevenson's sister, schooled in the ways of politics from being the wife of a man in the diplomatic service, appeared as hostess, and waved from calvacades and the vestibule of trains. But it was Albert without Victoria.

In the 1952 campaign, as the final train made its way through the East, there was a riot at Men-

ard prison, and the Governor had to interrupt the finale to go back to Illinois to settle the difficulty, leaving Senator Fulbright to carry on for him.

There was the horse meat scandal in his last year as governor, and of all years, the campaign year 1952. A superintendent of foods and dairies, appointed by the governor, had taken a bribe of \$3,500<sup>12</sup> from a packer who found it more profitable to grind up horses than cows for hamburgers. The public servant was indicted, and the packer was tried and convicted in short order. It wasn't much of a scandal, as political scandals go in Illinois, and the governor was not directly involved, but it was an unsavory sort of thing. One still hears the old jibe, "How do you want your hamburger done, win, place, or show?"

Then there was the Alger Hiss affair. Mr. Stevenson was in various branches of government service, including AAA and the State Department, at the time Mr. Hiss was also employed. They had had some official associations, but no personal ones. When Hiss was tried, Stevenson was asked for an opinion on his character, and he gave a deposition<sup>13</sup> from Springfield—he did not attend the New York trial—that so far as he was aware Mr. Hiss's reputation for integrity, loyalty and veracity had been "good." Mr. Hiss's reputation was excellent; had it not been, there would not have been so much sensation about the charges of perjury. For that mild and honest statement, Stevenson was brutally attacked, and in various forms of innuendo, linked with Hiss. You may recall Senator McCarthy's epanorthosis, "Did I say Alger, . . . I meant Adlai."

How much of the charges of subversion and communism rubbed off on this man, who never had any communist connections, is a matter of speculation. But in those days of semantic terrorism, when the whispered mention of subversive, fellow-traveler, pink, caused people to crawl under the bed, Stevenson's record of travel in Russia, of entertaining Russian diplomats here, his policy of co-existence with Russia, his veto, as governor, of the loyalty oath for teachers—these were suspicious actions.

What Mr. Stevenson's devotees lack in number, they make up in intensity. Were candidates determined by applause meters, Stevenson could be elected. Even his opponents are only mildly opposed; he has stirred up no violent personal opposition. The American public is accustomed to pre-

(Continued on page 34)

<sup>10</sup> Martin Mayer, *Madison Avenue*, U.S.A. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 307.

<sup>11</sup> Kenneth S. Davis, *A Prophet in His Own Country* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1957), pp. 311-317.

<sup>12</sup> See John Bartlow Martin, *Adlai Stevenson* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), pp. 134-136.

<sup>13</sup> See Busch, pp. 175-184.

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# Radio's \$64,000 Question

by William D. Sample

*Head of the Speech Department at St. Lawrence University, Mr. Sample is a specialist in radio speech who has become one of our regular (and always stimulating) contributors.*

**D**O BROADCASTERS ACTUALLY OPERATE their stations and networks in the interest of the public?

This is the fundamental question behind nearly every major critique of this two billion dollar a year industry. This is the fundamental question asked of each radio and television station every three years when its license to broadcast is up for renewal. This is the fundamental question being posed by listeners and viewers when they complain of programming inadequacies. This is the question upon which a congressional investigation this past year was based.

This is the question which today remains still largely unanswered.

To get a quick response to the question is quite simple. Ask any PTA mother who has complained about the type of shows presented for her children and you are likely to get:

NO!

Ask the general manager of any TV station if he feels his station's programs serve the public and you are sure to hear:

YES!

On either side you can and should hear the evidence which substantiates their views. The PTA mother will describe the violence, sadism and sex displayed on most detective shows; deplore the brutality of "westerns," and protest the insipid character of aged cartoons.

The station manager will point with some pride to the local and national news and public affairs programs, ninety-minute dramas, coverage of national political party conventions, etc.

These two extremes do not provide the real answer to the question. They do shed some light, though, on how people *feel* about the question.

On the whole, broadcasters *feel* they are doing a good job of serving the public's interest. They are not positively certain that they are.

Most listeners and viewers *feel* that on the whole most broadcasting is all right. They are not positively certain, however.

It is necessary to review some of broadcasting's facts of life to search for an answer to the very

fundamental question: do broadcasters actually operate in the interest of the public?

The frequencies over which radio and television stations send their signals are held by our government to belong to the public. Consequently a station is licensed to broadcast over a specifically assigned frequency for a period of three years. During that time the broadcaster has the freedom to program whatever he likes, but at the end of the period his broadcast record is subject to review, and the franchise to broadcast, the license, may be extended or revoked primarily on the basis of whether the station has served in the public's "interest, convenience and necessity."

Though these federal regulations have been on the books for many years the Federal Communications Commission has been hesitant in enforcing them. As a result, once a station owner gets a license he knows he can probably do whatever he pleases, in terms of programs, and every three years the license will be renewed.

The FCC has unquestionably done a magnificent job in regulating the electronic and engineering aspects of broadcasting. Technical violations are quickly spotted and, if not corrected, the violators usually lose their license and go off the air. It is, of course, a relatively easy matter to establish that a station is operating at a greater power than it is allowed, or that it is frequently sending its signal on some other frequency than that which it has been assigned.

It is almost impossible to prove that a station's programs are not in the public's interest, convenience and necessity for the very simple reason that no one has ever clearly and specifically defined what is in the public's interest, convenience and necessity.

Broadcasters, being businessmen, are primarily concerned with just two things: programs and advertisers. Knowing that programs create their own audience, and that it is an audience which a sponsor is really buying — not "time" — the broadcaster must develop and broadcast programs which will attract a sufficient number of human beings



to their radio or television receivers, which in turn an advertiser will want to reach with his commercial message.

Once a program is created, sold to a sponsor, broadcast and the rating services report how many humans listened or viewed; the broadcaster has his justification for creating the program in the first place.

"If twenty million people," he says, "watch this show each week — it must interest the public. It must be what the public wants. We must be serving in the public's interest, convenience and necessity."

The reasoning, of course, is not logical. People may view or listen simply because their only alternative is to turn off their sets. More areas of the country are serviced by only one radio and/or TV station than one would imagine. Many more areas have only the very limited choice of two TV stations and/or two radio stations.

And even if a majority of the available viewing or listening audience is tuned to a specific station at a particular time it may only mean that of the available programming offered this is the least offensive.

Ratings do not prove or justify the assertion that a program, or a station's total programming, is in the interest of the public. In most cases all that a rating service can establish is a good statistical guess on the number of radio or TV receivers tuned to a certain frequency or channel at a given time.

For example, as I write these lines in my den, my children are in the nursery, my wife is washing dishes in the kitchen and the TV set in the living room is turned on. Some rating services would classify this family of four as viewers, yet no one is watching or listening.

Since the broadcaster cannot really prove that his programming is justified on the basis of ratings, what else can he do?

Nothing.

Since there is no definition of what is in the public's real interest, convenience and necessity the broadcaster has absolutely no criteria, no guide, no rule book to follow. For this reason he is more to be pitied than scorned.

Only in retrospect, after a program has been broadcast, can any evaluation and judgment be pronounced by the Federal government, the sponsor, the broadcasters or the public. Only then can the debate begin. Only then can we rationalize, justify, applaud or condemn. Only then can we analyze to determine if what has already taken place has been in the public's interest, convenience and necessity.

Hindsight is valuable. In fact, historians tell us that it is often an extremely valuable tool for making judgments. If we could objectively review the forty years of broadcasting, analyze all its programming, and determine which programs, as well as which kinds of programs, really did serve the best interests of the public we might then be able to formulate some truly constructive criteria.

A look into the past might provide us with a definition for the future, a definition by which broadcasters, the public and the Federal Communications Commission could properly evaluate conduct.

Do broadcasters actually operate their stations and networks in the interest of the public?

This is the question broadcasters should attempt to answer not with rating services results, rationalizations, and public relations campaigns; but answer with fundamental consideration of this nation's needs and role in an explosively dangerous world society. By reviewing the past, considering the future and exploring the responsibilities we can define what really is in the public's interest.

Neither the government nor the public should need to take the initiative in this direction. Broadcasters should sense their responsibility in this direction and provide the kind of leadership that will insure arriving at a definition which will permit the greatest possible business growth of the industry, while simultaneously providing the finest quality broadcast service available anywhere.

If they decline this responsibility, then they do not merit future consideration when either the public or the government gets down to the task of defining what kind of broadcasting is in the public's real "interest, convenience, necessity."

For no two-billion-dollar American industry, captivating the attention of 90 million Americans in excess of thirty hours a week, can be permitted to endure without definition of purpose or ethical standards of conduct.

Probably no single institution, mode of communication or method of education so dominantly shapes our thinking and, consequently, our nation's destiny as much as the broadcasting industry. The very fact that many critics consider our society to be largely conformist, passive, non-intellectual, non-internationalistic is somewhat a reflection of forty years of broadcasting devoted largely to parochial programs like "Ma Perkins," "Dragnet," and "Lawrence Welk."

What do you think? Do broadcasters actually operate their stations and networks in the interest of the public?

Isn't that the real \$64,000 question?

# The Future Role of Linguistics

by William Walter Duncan

Mr. Duncan, Lecturer in Speech at Queens College, is also a teacher of English to foreign students at Queens.

IT IS NOT UNCOMMON TO FIND TEACHERS of English and Speech, even on the college level, whose knowledge of the nature of language in general and of English in particular is less than scientific. And this seems to be even truer of other teachers on all levels. Casual conversations with both teachers and students reveal a woeful ignorance of the sounds of English, the nature of sounds in connected speech, of assimilation, of dialects, of levels of usage, etc.

This is hardly the fault of the teachers or the students. They merely reflect their own education. It is easy to place most educated people into three classes in regard to their knowledge of and attitudes toward speech and English. One group consists of those who have a "liberal" point of view, often with a leave-your-speech-alone philosophy. Some of these people reflect the findings of the linguistic scientists without knowing the basis of those findings. Another group consists of those who are comfortable with their traditional, authoritarian orientation and fear that the liberals are promoting chaos. The third group consists of those who have an understanding of linguistic science and feel that in this approach we have an objective method for studying and talking about speech that goes beyond the attitude of the often prejudiced authoritarian or that of the sometimes supercilious liberal.

This author, with his own bias showing, clearly identifies himself with the linguistic scientists and feels that this new discipline, a product of this century, is turning a brilliant new light on the traditional approach to the study of Speech and English and is giving all of us a method and a vocabulary for truly meaningful research and teaching.

This is another way of saying that a revolution is taking place in the world of scholarship and pedagogy. It may be a slow moving one, but it is

the beginning of a drastic change nonetheless. And it is not inconceivable that in the not too distant future the first course that will be required of the college freshman will be not composition and/or Speech but an introduction to linguistic science, followed by a detailed, objective study of the history and development of modern English.

For those not familiar with linguistic science, three recent publications provide an excellent introduction to the field: Charles F. Hockett's *A Course in Modern Linguistics*; W. Nelson Francis' *The Structure of American English*; and Kenneth A. Oliver's *Our Living Language*. Hockett, Professor of Linguistics and Anthropology at Cornell, has written a clear, readable treatise without a false simplification of the subject matter. Nelson, Professor of English at Franklin and Marshall, has written a scholarly analysis of American English, based on the findings of linguistic science, that does not require a knowledge of the science in order to understand and to appreciate it. Oliver's book is an elementary and interesting introduction to English, stressing the historical background and the dynamic elements of change. In Hockett's book you find an orderly presentation of the generally accepted principles and facts of linguistics with a clear explanation of the scientific method for the study of English or any other language. In Francis' book, in addition to its information about the structure of American English, you find an antidote for those who see chaos in abandoning the traditional approach. In Oliver's book are considerations of vocabulary building and the communicative functions of grammar, along with the structural development of the language.

For those with less time or those who wish to explore the field further, two booklets which are now classics are recommended: Bernard Block and George L. Trager's *Outline of Linguistic Analysis*, and Leonard Bloomfield's *Outline Guide for the*

*Practical Study of Foreign Languages.* (Both are special publications of the Linguistic Society of America.) The Block-Trager booklet, eighty-two pages with bibliography, and the Bloomfield one, sixteen pages without bibliography, were prepared primarily for those who study and teach foreign languages. But the material in both is applicable to English and together they offer a good introduction to linguistic science.

How will linguistic science affect speech education?

First of all, to put it too briefly, it will mean the end of the old this-is-right-that-is-wrong attitude which will be replaced by scientific descriptions that will be relatively free of value judgments. It will eliminate the traditional mixing of dubious logic and opinion with facts. It will give us a description of the way people have used and now use the language. It will help destroy a good deal of the prejudice that now exists about usage and will make it possible for us to make choices on the basis of facts rather than opinions.

Secondly, linguistic science will give scholars in various fields — anthropology, sociology, psychology, Speech, English, etc. — a common vocabulary which will make it possible for them to communicate easily and accurately with each other on matters pertaining to speech — whether English or other languages. Linguistics, like any other science, is subdivided in a systematic manner. Thus anyone familiar with the field will know on what level any discussion is taking place. He will know when the conversation moves from one level to another; he will know when he is talking about facts or theories, when he is describing what really exists or merely what he prefers.

Third, linguistic science will give the student a method for learning his own language and others with less of the "blood, toil, sweat, and tears" that now so often prevails. With an adequate knowledge of linguistic science the student will see his own language and others objectively and will be able to avoid the subjective maze that now perplexes so many.

Modern linguistics is an established science, and it is becoming better known each year. It is an area of study which should be of special interest to Speech teachers. Indeed, linguistics is often defined as the scientific study of speech. Certainly the linguistic scientist is first of all and fundamentally interested in speech. Linguistic scientists have shown little interest in much of the work being done in Speech Departments, but Speech (and English teachers) dare not ignore the work being done by the linguistic scientists.

## FOSTERING GROUP THINKING

(Continued from page 11)

persons who disagree on values or standards by which to measure and test. Here lies what may be a basic difference between promotively interdependent thinking in learning groups and problem-solving groups. Awareness and expression from that awareness may be accepted as good in a study-discussion group, but with no need for any agreement as to what is beautiful, fine, or good. A group meeting to solve a problem cannot engage in interdependent thinking until the possible values, goals, and standards are shared.

One will frequently find that he is in the presence of disciplined individual thinkers when he observes promotively interdependent thought. Each participant behaves as if responsible for the whole group. There is no diversion, no wandering from the subject, no tendency to introduce jokes. Probably we can teach a high degree of self-discipline in thinking, control of awareness, etc. But only when the person is not struggling with some unfinished personal problem, has elected the topic, is capable of acute awareness of what goes on in the group, senses that his words are being heard with respect, and that he can make some difference in the outcome of the discussion will such group thinking occur.

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# Emerson's Almost Perfect Orator: Edward Taylor

by Egbert S. Oliver

*An expert in American literature, Dr. Oliver is Professor of English in the Portland (Oregon) State College.*

"... so much love poured out through so much imagination...."

**A** WONDERFUL MAN; I had almost said, a perfect orator."

Emerson wrote these words in his journal concerning the Rev. Edward Taylor, the Methodist minister to the Seaman's Bethel Chapel in Boston. Taylor was a man to notice when he spoke and Emerson was a careful observer and analyst of the art of speaking. Hence in the juxtaposition of Taylor, the eloquent "natural" speaker, and Emerson, the practitioner of conversation and public oral communication to a superlative degree himself but even more a student of the creative art of speech in all its communicative aspects, we have an opportunity to study the performer and the critic, the doer and the evaluator.

Emerson's enthusiastic endorsement was called forth by Taylor's lecture on Temperance in the old Concord church, March 13, 1837, the same year in which Emerson himself made his greatest public address. The two men were not new to one another, for their acquaintance was then five years old, and it was to continue for thirty-five more, until the death of the spectacular minister of the Seaman's Bethel in 1871.

Temperance may not be the best subject on which to demonstrate forensic skill, and, moreover, Father Taylor (as he was widely known along the seacoast) was away from his normal sea setting and his favorite sea audience. But he had a capacity for platform communication which made his every appearance memorable.

Emerson's journal note on the occasion of this lecture uses a series of explosive exclamations: "... what splendor! what sweetness! what richness! what depth! what cheer! How he conciliates, how he humanizes! how he exhilarates and ennobles! Beautiful philanthropist! Godly poet! the Shakespeare of the sailor and the poor. God has found one harp of divine melody to ring and sigh sweet music amidst caves and cellars." On examination, most of these exclamations will fit into a more prosy observation that Taylor brought the

aliveness of his personality and imagination into harmonious relationship with his audience.

Taylor was without doubt one of the great and effective pulpit speakers of his generation, which was a generation of great pulpit oratory. He attracted the unlearned and the learned, the prominent and the unskilled toilers of the earth and the sea. Not only Emerson, but also Webster, Dr. Channing, Charles Dickens, Harriet Martineau, and the great ebb and flow of mankind heard him gladly.

He made no great speeches but he was a great speaker. He lacked education but he was a great man. He wrote nothing. He probably would have been incapable of writing. But speech was his element. His mind was active and sensitive to his hearers; but even more his spirit and his great sympathy for mankind were never dead. He lifted, he enlightened and enlivened whatever subject he touched. Speech was for him no dead medium, but a living, flowing, cascading flood of meaning.

The man and his speech were one. How paltry it is to say merely that the man was sincere. He and his speech were as wedded as the sun and its light.

Orphaned and homeless he went to sea as a cabin boy at the age of seven. He grew robust and broad-shouldered on his element, the sea. At seventeen he was stirred by a Methodist preacher to the active outpouring life of a Christian. He was imprisoned by the British during the War of 1812, and on the request of the prisoners he served them as an informal chaplain. Illiterate but filled with an intensely active spiritual life, he learned to read after the war was over, started preaching, and for fifty years served Massachusetts sea-going people.

His speech was native to him and his experiences. Emerson rightly spoke of him as a poet, for his grasp was for the metaphor which flashes with meaning. Emerson has written that God speaks in tropes; Taylor interpreted God and the world to his auditors in tropes. He could say that St. Peter was "the last end of a thunderstorm, softened by the breath of the Almighty." Christ was

a life-boat. His sermon was filled with the sea-life imagery which was such an intimate part of his thinking. Icebergs, storm, waves, the anchor, drifting, the rudder, deep waters, the comforting port — such were the metaphorical elements of his discourse.

Emerson was a Boston minister when Taylor became the captain of Seaman's Bethel, and Taylor was very fond of the quiet, eloquent, scholarly Emerson. Emerson, he said, "is more like Jesus Christ than anyone I have ever known." But Taylor's warm and active spiritual vitality did not accord with Emerson's more aloof and coldly skeptical withdrawal from the Unitarian ministry. Taylor showed the depth and humanity of his own life in his wholehearted acceptance of the living Emerson while at the same time rejecting his religious inadequacy.

Emerson, he said, is "the sweetest soul God ever made; but he knows no more of theology than Balaam's ass did of Hebrew grammar. — If the devil got him, he would never know what to do with him. There seems to me to be a screw loose somewhere, but I could never tell where; for, listen as close as I might, I could never hear any jar in the machinery."

When Taylor wanted to praise some older ministers whom he thought of as moral giants, he said that "when God made them He rolled up His sleeves to the armpits. They are like camels bearing precious spices and browsing on bitter herbs. They deserve to be carried on beds of down, their horses should be fed on golden oats, and they on preserved diamonds."

It is no wonder that Emerson said, "The wonderful and laughing life of his illustration keeps us broad awake."

And he kept his auditors awake by his own vitality. Here was a man who could not "make" a speech: he *was* a speech. Speech flowed through him and became a flame.

Emerson spoke of his complete lack of method in the handling of his material, even of the chaos of his "bewildering oratory." Emerson knew that one could not examine with any critical faculty the great eloquence which continuously inspired and elevated his audiences. "A creature of instinct," wrote Emerson, "his colors are all opaline and dove's-neck-lustre and can only be seen at a distance. Examine them, and they disappear."

Taylor did not achieve his results with the craftsman's method. He did not erect structures of speech. His muse was no offspring of the formal outline but rather of the fountain. Speech came from him alive. This aliveness of Taylor's was

always a present part of Emerson's attempts to catch the spirit of this unusual and glorious man. "His exceeding life throws other gifts into deep shade."

On the first Sunday of 1835 Emerson attended two church services in Boston and contrasted them. In the morning he went to the Swedenborg Chapel where he heard a "severely simple" sermon, in method and manner much like a proposition in geometry, wholly uncolored and unimpassioned.

"At the opposite pole, say rather in another Zone from this hard truist, was Taylor, in the afternoon, wishing his sons a happy new year, praying God for his servants of the brine, to favor commerce, the bleached sail, the white foam, and through commerce to Christianize the universe. . . . And so he went on. — this poet of the sailor and of Ann Street, — fusing all the rude hearts of his auditory with the heat of his own love . . ."

Emerson tries again and again to "understand" and analyze what it was that made the living Father Taylor such an experience for those who heard him, recognizing and yet not recognizing that this living spirit in its very vitality could only in the shallowest way yield to analysis, while its glory lay in its relationship to the living uniqueness of the man being himself, loving, caring, sharing, finding mankind in need and pouring forth whatever element of truth or light he found at that moment to minister to man's condition of need.

He is, wrote Emerson, "a work of the same hand that made Demosthenes and Shakspear and Burns, and is guided by instincts diviner than rules. His whole discourse is a string of audacious felicities harmonized by a spirit of joyful love. Everybody is cheered and exalted by him. He is a living man. . . ."

When Charles Dickens tried to see what made up the quality of Taylor's compelling eloquence, he was also reminded of the way Taylor put himself into sympathy with his audience: ". . . he studied their sympathies and understandings much more than the display of his own powers."

Here was a man who could speak to all men, of whatever color or condition, poet or grocer, educated or illiterate seaman. Emerson thought that the basic factor of his ability in coming to all men with an immediacy of appeal was that he let himself speak. He was the speaker. There was no pose, no posture, no craft: there was the living man. "He is mighty Nature's child," said Emerson. "He speaks himself."

This genuineness gives him assurance and poise and grace. "He is perfectly sure in his generous humanity. He rolls the world into a ball

and tosses it from hand to hand. He says touching things, plain things, grand things, cogent things, which all men must perforce hear. He says them with hand and head and body and voice; the accompaniment is total and even varied. . . . Free happy expression of himself and of the deeps of human nature, of the happier, sunny facts of life, of things connected and lying amassed and grouped in healthy nature, that is his power and his teacher."

Here was Emerson's Man Speaking. Did any other man using human voice ever stir him to such efforts to analyze and understand human eloquence? This scarcely educated saint who experienced life and uttered forth his experience, whose life was speech and whose speech was life, captured Emerson's imagination and held his attention over forty years, embodying much of what Emerson tried in many ways to say of the nature of eloquence.

Taylor's presence in private conversation held the same charm and magic as his public utterance. "I delight in his great personality," wrote Emerson, *thinking of private conversations, "the way and sweep of the man . . ."* If Taylor had developed a theory of speech — which he wouldn't have done — he probably would have had a view similar to Emerson's, that true speech must come from a living fountain, ". . . so much love poured out through so much imagination . . ."

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# Another Use for Tape Recordings

by Louis J. LaBorwit

*Speech Therapist, Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia.*

**D**ESPITE THE EVER-INCREASING understanding and appreciation of speech correction services in the public schools, there are still too many classroom teachers who do not entirely comprehend the extent, nature, and evaluation of the various disorders of speech to be found among their pupils.

Too often cases are overlooked and not referred to the speech therapist. This lack of understanding often evidences itself when the speech therapist accidentally comes in contact with the various problems throughout the school. The reply of the teacher may be typically: "I didn't think anything could be done for his problem."

"He hardly ever talks in class so I didn't know he had any difficulty."

"I didn't know a lisp was a speech defect."

These remarks are not inconsiderate or callous. There are still just too many teachers who have little or no information regarding the speech difficulties of children. Within the public schools, it would seem the rightful job of the speech correctionist to alleviate this unintentioned lack of specialized speech education.

Diehl and Stinnett, in their study on the efficiency of teacher referrals, concluded that "Elementary grade teachers with no orientation in speech disorders can be expected to locate speech defective children with less than 60 per cent accuracy. They can be expected to fail to identify two of every five who would in routine screenings be located by trained speech clinicians. These same teachers can, however, be expected to locate severe-type articulation defectives with slightly better than 80 per cent accuracy. Teachers appear to have least skill in recognizing a voice disorder. . . ." They felt that "an in-training orientation program to help teachers recognize and identify speech defectives seems justified." They have suggested that "additional research, to study the effect of such an orientation program, is indicated."

In many school systems workshops are given to acquaint the teacher with the services and fa-

cilities of her school. We can assume that speech therapists have held these workshops and still found, to their frustration, that certain children have been overlooked by the teacher.

It would seem that augmentation of workshops with a more vivid demonstration is indeed indicated. Herein lies a most productive use for the tape recorder. It is recommended that specially prepared tapes be played to each teaching staff. These tapes would include typical recordings of children with the various speech problems. They should be representative of the different age and grade levels.

Each recording segment should be prefaced with a statement of the child's grade, age and type of defect. No names should be included. Some mention of what to listen for would be helpful. For example: "You are about to hear a nine-year-old boy who is in the fourth grade. He is going to read page 21 of his reader *Times and Places*. [Teachers might be encouraged to follow in a copy of this book]. This boy has a moderately severe articulatory speech problem. You should particularly listen for his difficulty with the (s), (z), (th), (f), (v), (r), and (l) sounds."

There should be some recording of conversational speech in addition to the structured oral reading material. After each playback discussion would be useful and questions would be answered.

Related to this, the recordings made of the children's speech prior to therapy, during, and after therapy could be used to further demonstrate the worth and efficacy of the speech program.

This, then, is one more way in which the necessary cooperation, interest and understanding of the classroom teacher may be enlisted to foster the evaluation and correction of the speech problems in school children.

<sup>†</sup> Diehl, Charles F. and Stinnett, Charles D., Efficiency of Teacher Referrals in a School Speech Testing Program. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, 24, 1959, 34-36.

# How To Be Influenced Discriminatingly

by Barbara Lieb

Miss Lieb is the author of "The Malignant Heareotype" in our February, 1960 issue.

CONCERN FOR THE ART OF SPEAKING has been felt for many centuries. However, it is only comparatively recently that concern for the art and skill of listening has been given emphasis by educators. It is true that Shakespeare wrote, "It is the disease of not listening, the malady of not marking, that I am troubled withal." Likewise, Christopher Morely wrote, "there is only one rule for being a good talker: learn how to listen."

But as is often the case, the insight of genius is often not heeded until a crisis calls it to attention. Such seems to have been the case with the study and teaching of the listening process. In 1941, Nichols reported only fourteen researches related to classroom listening.<sup>1</sup> His bibliography in 1957 lists 101 studies and 356 articles on the process of listening. Most of these studies seem to have cropped up after the second world war, when the realization of the effect of oratory like that of Hitler and Churchill appeared to have moved nations full of men into action.

It is true that there was great oratory before the second world war. It is also true that oratory alone is not the cause of war. However, nowhere else in history was the oratory of war actually disseminated through so many diverse parts of the world by mass media. And nowhere else were so many peoples involved at one time in the effects of a war. Educators, stimulated by the potential powers which belonged to those who knew how to use the spoken word effectively, urged the teaching of listening on all levels of education.

Speech teachers, in particular, who had always been concerned with teaching students how to exert influence, now faced the additional task of teaching them how to respond discriminatingly to the influence of others. And so Speech teachers and other teachers were told to emphasize listening in their classrooms. However, the immediate lack of research on techniques of teaching listening, not to mention the lack of knowledge about the process of listening itself, left many teachers in an intellectual quandary. Some resorted to the traditional concepts of the term "listening," which

meant that they entreated youngsters to "pay attention," "take notes," or "listen carefully to what he is saying!"

For example, a few weeks ago, I had occasion to visit a second grade classroom. During an informal chat with the teacher, I inquired about the teaching of speaking and listening. The teacher informed me that the teaching of both these skills was very important even in the second grade. "How do you teach listening?" I inquired. "Well, we're always telling the children to pay attention." "Pay attention to what?" I asked. She looked at me dumbfounded, and replied to my seeming asininity, "To the words, of course."

In the light of this experience and of reading some of the texts and articles which subscribe to the "listen to the words and sit up straight" theory of listening, I wondered if the point was being missed in even the comparatively few classrooms where listening skill is emphasized. Listening for the words does not always promote the kind of discrimination in response that we want.

For example, in a class of Speech for the foreign students, an indignant Arabian student came in one day and said, "An American handed me the salt, and I thanked him." He answered, "Don't mention it." Why shouldn't I have mentioned it?"

Likewise, how many of us have had the experience of being able to repeat back and understand every word in a passage from Gertrude Stein, but have had to sit and meditate about those words and their pattern in context before we could derive any meaning from them.

It would seem, then, that paying attention is not enough — that somehow we must get behind what is said to what the speaker's (or writer's) motive was — to what he is trying to do to us when he uses the words.

If we tell our students to pay attention, we often get what we think are the observable manifestations of attention, such as the "frozen" alert look which remains plastered on the student's face throughout a talk or the "hands clasped — feet sol-

<sup>1</sup> Ralph Nichols, "Factors in Listening Comprehension," *Speech Monographs* 15:154-163, 1948.

<sup>2</sup> Ralph Nichols et. al., *Selected Bibliography on Listening Comprehension*, Compiled under the auspices of the Listening Comprehension Committee of the National Society for the Study of Communication, 1957, mimeo.

idly on ground — back at ninety degree angle with chair" posture, all of which characterize the student who is *focusing his attention on "paying attention,"* rather than on listening for speaker motives.

In the same category as the "posture theory of listening" goes the "note-taking theory of listening." While I am not advocating that note-taking be discouraged for listening to lengthy formal lectures, I am inclined to think that students should not be encouraged to take notes while listening to extemporaneous speeches in the Speech class. The reason for this is twofold. A study by McClendon showed no significant differences in listening comprehension between groups taking notes on lectures or groups who took no notes on lectures; no difference in either immediate or delayed recall of materials was found for either of these groups.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Paul McClendon, "An Experimental Study of the Relationship Between Note-taking Practices and Listening Comprehension of College Freshmen During Expository Lectures," *Speech Monographs* (abstract), Vol. XXIV (1957) p. 95.

In addition, the function of the Speech class, as I see it, is to prepare students to participate effectively in communication situations in everyday life. One of the reasons I give my students for using an extemporaneous style of speaking in the Speech class is that they will have no manuscript or memorization aids in their everyday life situations. Likewise, in listening to speech in everyday situations, we are seldom prone to whipping out a notebook when we meet our neighbor on the street, for example, or when we are engaged in discussion or conversations with our friends and colleagues.

It is apparent that at the present time we do not know as much about the physiological and psychological interfunctioning of the listening process as we would like to. Progress in this area, and in the teaching of listening, is hindered to some extent by the fact that listening is not as easily observed as is speaking. We have few indications while the student is listening of how (or whether) he is reacting to what is being said. However, de-



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spite the difficulties inherent in the teaching of listening, it still remains important that students be taught to function effectively in two roles — as one who influences others and as one who is influenced by others. Perhaps there are ways of teaching the relationships of the two processes in the Speech class.

Surveying twenty-two textbooks in Speech published after 1950, I found that most seemed to agree that the purpose of persuasive speaking was to influence human behavior, that persuasion involved the interfunctioning of reasoning and emotion, and that the persuader must have a stake in what he is trying to get others to do. In addition, he must know the attitudes of his audience in respect to what he wants done. Some texts also emphasized the speaker's responsibility to his audience to search for the truth — the risk for not doing so being his eventual loss of "ethical proof."

An example of the latter idea may be found in the incidence of McCarthyism in this country. When McCarthy's listeners discovered flaws in his integrity, his persuasion was no longer effective.

If we are to teach listening in conjunction with the foregoing concepts of persuasion, we might compare the functions involved in being both an "influencer" and an "influencee." If the persuader must have a stake in exerting influence, then the listener must ask: Why does the speaker want me to believe this way? What's in it for me if I do change my beliefs? If the persuader must know the predominant attitudes of his audience in respect to what he wants them to do or believe, then the listener ought to become aware of his own attitudes and those of the speaker before he allows himself to change. If the speaker has a responsibility to the audience and to himself to search for the facts, then the listener must have a responsibility to the other members of the audience and to himself to search for facts behind the speaker's words before he changes his own behavior.

Any method of teaching which aims at teaching students their responsibilities as listeners must ultimately lead to demands made on the speaker by the listeners to present "truth" insofar as he has discovered it at the time of delivery. If the aim in teaching students to become effective speakers is in any sense involved with "how to win friends and influence people," then the aim in teaching students to become effective listeners must be one of "how to avoid being influenced improperly even at the risk of losing friends," at least until the motives behind the words of the speaker have been analyzed in an attempt to discover whether he is "friend" or "foe."

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# The American Legion Oratorical Contest:

## Communication or Exhibition?

by James Robertson Andrews

*A remedy for the problem presented by Mr. Andrews has already been suggested by the SAES, in its official "Code for Contests in Public Speaking," published in the November, 1956 issue of TODAY'S SPEECH.*

A BRIGHT, ALERT HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR was animatedly describing to her school principal her ideas on why the Constitution was important to her and how it operated to make America a wonderful place to live. She talked vividly and with real enthusiasm on what freedom of speech and freedom of religion meant to her. The principal, sensing her genuine interest, suggested that she write her ideas down and, with the help of one of her teachers, prepare a speech for the American Legion Oratorical Contest. Several weeks later she appeared on a stage to give a memorized "oration" on the Constitution; yet something had happened in the interim. Instead of the vivacious young girl, with fresh, meaningful ideas on the Constitution, there appeared an automaton, precisely articulating polished phrases of meaningless abstraction, exhibiting stiff, stilted gestures. What happened to cause this transformation from honest enthusiasm to a painfully artificial performance? It is the potential that the American Legion Oratorical Contest has for channelling natural enthusiasm into effective communication, and its failure to do so, that I would like to discuss in this paper.

As Speech teachers, we should feel justly proud that a large national organization such as the American Legion should choose a speaking situation as the mode of communication whereby the United States Constitution is studied and discussed by thousands of young people. But we who teach communicative speaking, based on tested principles, for the purpose of gaining a response from what we hope are critical listeners, have a duty to see that such a wonderful opportunity for giving practical training in speaking is not employed in such a way that it violates the tenets of sound speech theory. Having served as a judge and been a member of audiences for American Legion Oratorical Contests in Pennsylvania and

New Jersey, I have come to doubt whether this contest is really fulfilling its potential.

The major goal of the contest is to acquaint the student with the Constitution. A speech, if prepared and delivered well, would be an excellent *modus operandi* if the aim of the contest was conceived as something broader than exclusively a knowledge of the Constitution. Rather than simply knowing our Constitution, would it not be infinitely better to attempt to train students to *communicate* effectively the concept that the Constitution is the basis of our way of life, that is, to make the Constitution a meaningful, living organism to the listeners? This places the emphasis where it belongs: on the *audience* who will *respond* to the speaker's ideas and not on concocting polished phrases that basically are devoid of concrete ideas. The results of the contest may be discussed in relation to the areas of content and delivery.

Our Constitution affords abundant material for a speech. There are great principles involved and it seems extremely important that these principles be put in specific, concrete terms that would serve to make it a real, vital document to the audience. This is nothing new, but simply reiteration of what modern textbook writers and rhetorical theorists consistently advocate: making the abstract concrete.

For example, without the Constitutional safeguard of freedom of speech, could a leader of national prominence severely criticize, as Mr. Stevenson did in the last issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Governmental policy and offer a comprehensive plan of his own in its stead? It is fine to say that the Constitutional checks and balances prevent unjust domination by any one group. But this alone, without support, is meaningless. Without this system could Congress attempt to modify what it considers a limited program of defense by the Executive; could the Administration prevent the

legislators from carrying out what it views as reckless spending; could the Supreme Court rule that laws passed by various state governments had the effect of making the Negro a second class citizen and consequently nullify them? These are specific examples of our Constitution at work in the modern world, only a few of such examples that exist *ad infinitum*. This seems to me to be patently obvious, but this concept does not appear evident in the contest speeches. On the contrary, the speeches verbally consist mainly of platitudes about the Constitution that are designed to "sound good" but have the contrary effect of making this wonderful document more abstract and less founded on the practical reality of democratic society.

In discussing the delivery of these speeches, one characteristic stands out: many are exercises in studied artificiality. They negate the basic principle of delivery typified by the comment made by Oliver, Dickey and Zelko in *Communicative Speech* that:

The delivery of a speech should not be thought of as merely a mechanical process consisting in standing correctly, gesturing gracefully, and speaking with clear articulation and in well modulated tones. . . . What is required above all is that you accustom yourself to thinking of

problems from the point of view of your listeners, trying to understand their needs and desires, and determining to do your best to make your own ideas and convictions meaningful and attractive to them.<sup>1</sup>

Consequently, they state that "the delivery of a speech is not a performance . . . one of the first ideas to be discarded, therefore, is that a speech is some kind of artificial, dramatic production." In general, the "orations" given at the American Legion Oratorical Contests are performances, not speeches.

The contests as they are now operating have serious implications for Speech teachers and raise important questions that we as a profession must face. First, who does the training of these high school speakers? The answer is those who either are not themselves aware of sound Speech principles or who feel that "elocutionary" techniques are the ones that pay dividends in such contests. This thought suggests another question: who sets up the standards for the contest?

It would appear that Speech teachers do not, and it is they who are or should be most intimately

<sup>1</sup> Robert T. Oliver, Dallas C. Dickey, and Harold P. Zelko, *Communicative Speech*, rev. ed. New York: Henry Holt, 1956, p. 39.  
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 40.

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involved with its operation. One reason, perhaps, that the advice of the Speech teacher is not solicited may be the old concept that still persists in some quarters that the Speech teacher is concerned with delivery and not content. Two personal experiences may illustrate this point. A few years ago in a high school in New Jersey, a student who had already won the contest on the school level and was going to compete that night in the local contest was sent by the English teacher who had trained her to the Speech teacher who was asked to "add a few gestures." At the most recent contest that I judged, another judge approached me with the comment, "So you teach elocution at the University, eh?" This, perhaps, is symptomatic of much of the thinking by those concerned with the contest in relation to the Speech teacher's job.

The ultimate question is, what can we as Speech teachers do to correct this basically unsound speech practice? First, when and if called upon to train a speaker for the contest, we must employ methods that we sincerely believe will produce sound communication and not be seduced into thinking that we must use those techniques that will produce a winner. Secondly, there are those of us whose Speech classes include Education majors. It is important that we lead these future teachers to

an understanding of what communication really is, so that the Education profession as a whole may join us in condemning those practices that are unsound and in working to improve them. Thirdly, since Speech teachers in high schools, colleges and universities are frequently called upon to act as judges, they have an excellent opportunity to urge reform on those running the contest. This could be done verbally and by letter.

The American Legion Oratorical Contest could provide an excellent opportunity for students to get practical experience in communication, i. e., in attempting to get various audiences to respond to a really significant topic. It is my opinion that the wonderful opportunity for such valuable experience is being missed and that much of what is learned by participating students must be unlearned when they take the basic Speech course in our colleges and universities. We, as Speech teachers, can and must do something to remedy this situation. If we really believe that this contest is not compatible with the best Speech practices, it is our duty to speak out in order to make this contest a truly valuable educational experience, an opportunity for students to learn and demonstrate those principles that make for effective communication. Will we accept the challenge?

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# The Use of Television for Education In Time of Conflict

by Bernarr Cooper

*Dr. Cooper is director of the Television and Radio program at the University of Florida, Tallahassee.*

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN, and many experiments in learning and teaching have been conducted, in that area designated (for want of a better term) "Utilization." In evaluating teaching approaches related to broadcast media, there is little evidence to indicate that the theories of propaganda and propaganda analysis have yet been related to television and radio.

Propaganda content and analysis of it is often treated as a distinct and sociologically unrelated methodology—unrelated that is to the business of writing, directing, and producing for radio and television. We rarely extract from mass communications research principles which we can apply in the classroom.

Indeed, soul-searching in the area of what may or may not have been accomplished during the last five years in "Mass Communications Research" has left many an educational televisionist and experimental designer with the conclusion that what is known is relatively limited, and what is limited perhaps presents a need to re-evaluate some of the experimental designs which have led to that broad if indeterminate conclusion: "No significant difference."<sup>1</sup>

However, both the propagandist and the teacher find that apparently in subjective terms, a "significant difference" does exist. And it is these "differences," reflecting as they do social patterns and awareness of the uses to which knowledge can be put, that seem to have implication in a society faced with problems of ideological emergence and growing populations that make increasing claim upon the economic potential of those nations which attempt to serve their demanding populations.

The propagandist is concerned with effecting attitudinal changes in the target group. The educator is concerned with increasing the basic information of the student and, hopefully, moving the

student from the position of a creature of little knowledge to one capable of using basic information as a means to enlarging his vision of the world in which he lives. Thus, to some extent, the objectives of both the propagandist and the educator are not too dissimilar, and indeed depend upon the broad dissemination of information to accomplish the goals which should hopefully be those of "thinking men in growing social milieus."

Knowing one's political and geographical neighbor thus becomes not only desirable but a necessity in a world whose boundaries are rapidly shrinking and whose peoples need to know better how to live, one with the other, if they are not to destroy each other in the ideological battle for existence.

The implications for broad and quick dissemination of information and materials related to other peoples and other places are, then, quite clear. The use of television to accomplish this end presents no problem. The dissemination of information and materials may be at the adult level, and may be confined to adding to already known factual knowledge. Or it may be at the basic level of learning, confined to the initial acquisition of knowledge. Adequate samples of such uses of the medium already exist in many communities; and it is only awareness in relating knowledge in the area of "Social Studies" to knowledge in "Economic and Historical Developments" that requires planned integration in presentation and examination.

From such a method of planned educational presentation arises the obvious problem of integrating the teaching of basic knowledge with the structuring of attitudinal approaches which is the major concern of the propagandist.

At a time of national and international concern with the need for upgrading knowledge, teacher-potential, and teaching methodology, it is a matter of concern that a study should appear, which has apparently had both time and money expended upon it, which contributes only tangential, sub-

<sup>1</sup> Wm. McPhee, of the Bureau of Applied Research, Columbia University, made particular reference to this at the Speech and Theatre Convention, Statler-Hilton Hotel, Washington, D. C., December 28, *The Future of Mass Media Research*, "Bases for Pessimism."

jective "guesses" as to methods for meeting real instructional needs and solving real problems in teaching methodology. An examination of such a study and its implications for the future, may prove of some value.

#### TELEVISION AND THE ARMED FORCES

Under the title, *Television, Education and the Armed Forces*, the Quartermaster Training Command released a study in December, 1958. An impressive list of visitations, persons and bibliography is appended to this study, leading the reader to expect a significant piece of research encompassing the areas indicated in the title.

Its usefulness is a matter of concern not only to the educational televisionist but to all citizens who are taxpayers, for it is the public's money that has backed both the research and the publication of the study. Moreover reference to a work with such a title will henceforth find its way into the bibliographical references, perhaps to exercise more influence than it merits.

A careful scrutiny of the study reveals the following points, here noted with some suggestion as to implication in the broad areas of instructional television and educational problems:

The writer of the study suggests that we need "nerve centers" of communications to take care of war-time needs in instructional areas for mobilization purposes. Such a suggestion appears not to differ very much from the same kind of need faced in civilian education, at all levels, in the foreseeable future, with the present and upcoming teacher shortage added to the problem.

In estimating future needs in an organization training for war, the writer of the study tells us "Job descriptions include knowledge, special skills, and abilities required of each man."<sup>2</sup> This it would appear that an organization properly planned for war-time purposes is concerned with the same objectives which are the concern of the educator in a democracy, namely, the need of imparting a body of basic information early in the educational process. Thus, basic information forms the cornerstone for the development of special skills by the student so that the individual, according to ability, emerges as a contributing member of his democratic environment.

The study points out that a war-time condition will find us with some damaging inadequacies. By implication these are inadequacies in the face of a need to survive. In civilian and military education, he sees a mass input of students, a shortage of qualified instructors, inadequate facilities, shortage

of (up-to-date) equipment, and "... a doctrinal lag in the incorporation of new concepts, new procedures, and new equipment."<sup>3</sup>

But what the writer of the study sees as war-time conditions of need are large in the scope of the modern educational process, too. At all levels we face the mass input of students, and the shortage of qualified teachers.<sup>4</sup> The cry of inadequate facilities and shortage of equipment is felt in many systems of public education. And certainly to the educational televisionist the resistance to the use of the TV medium for direct-teaching, for supplementary education, or for enrichment, is not new.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the study comes to the conclusion that we must find a quick, effective and reliable medium for training vast numbers of persons with a limited number of teaching exposures. To ensure this the writer of the study recommends the medium which is the most effective, the most flexible and the most available — television. However, buried in a footnote he makes the parenthetic observation that once trained, the individual must be used only to the extent and specialization of his training. Greater and more studied care must likewise be used in the selection of students, and commanders must not be permitted to exercise "individual idiosyncrasies" in the handling of people after an expensive education and training experience.<sup>6</sup>

In his discussion, the writer of *Television, Education and the Armed Forces* points out the advantages and some of the mobilization needs of the future in the event of an all-out war. Among the things to which he again gives emphasis are such basic needs at teacher personnel, fast and adequate distribution of new materials and new

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Basic arithmetic reveals a 15% net loss in numbers of teachers over the last eight years. See *Air Letter*, (Washington, D. C.: The National Education Association, April 20, 1959), p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Rickover refers to what passes for "enrichment" in the harried teacher's classroom as "Too often . . . a 'make work' or 'make study' project. . . ." H. G. Rickover, *Education and Freedom*, (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1959), pp. 123f.

<sup>6</sup> Allen, *op. cit.*, fn., p. 19.

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<sup>2</sup> Robert M. Allen, *Television, Education and the Armed Forces*, Quartermaster School, Fort Lee, Virginia, 1 December 1958.



developments, a fast method of cataloging and adding to instructional materials, bibliographies, reference lists and the like, and the need to be able to distribute instruction on a broad national basis quickly, adequately and yet with some deliberation to student groups that may be widely scattered geographically.

Taking the approach that "information is everybody's business in time of war," the study also recommends technical set-ups which make possible links between civilian and military instructional interests, teacher-training of civilian teachers to make possible such interrelationships at the moment of need, more care and more adequate methods for screening potential learners and teachers. Although the writer presents nothing new in his suggestions for teacher-training, the potential of television to do the training, or the ability of the student to learn by means of instruction offered through the medium, his application of these principles on a civilian cooperation basis presents some interesting problems with which to conjure.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Allen's suggestions concerning the learning effectiveness of the medium have been reported on in many experiments, e. g.: experiments noted in Hideya Kumata, *An Inventory of Instructional Research*, (Ann Arbor, Michigan) December 1, 1956; Charles Siepmann, *TV and the School Crisis*, (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1958), *passim*; NAEB *Journal* reports of "The Effectiveness of Television as a Teaching Tool," for November 1958; February, 1959, and March, 1959, are but a few examples.

While *Television, Education and the Armed Forces* scores the lack of sufficient research in depth in many aspects of the learning process as achieved through the television medium, and although the writer points out areas in which more information is needed and more research needs to be done, he adds nothing to the list already established by those engaged in such research.<sup>8</sup>

He reports the old saw about the need of the psychologists to come up with better answers and better techniques; he is critical of the fact that the television medium is unique unto itself and needs to uncover those special techniques which will completely exploit the medium for the maximum benefits which can be derived. Certainly, the educational televisionist is aware of these needs, and is perhaps more self-critical than the traditional-methodology educator.

The writer of the study comes to the familiar conclusion that "... educators are not television producers and television producers are not usually educators. . . ." What the writer fails to note is that some progress to close the gap is being made.

<sup>8</sup> For an interesting list of research areas see: William H. Allen, "Research and New Educational Media: Summary and Problems," *Audio Visual Communication Review*, (Washington: National Education Association, Dept. of Audio-Visual Instruction), VII, 2 (1959) pp. 91-6.

<sup>9</sup> Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

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There is a concerted effort, however limited at the present, to teach teachers to become producers and to encourage the TV producer who would work in the field of educational television to learn more about the objectives of education. On a ringing note the study suggests that it is the duty of the television theorists and practitioners "... even to save the world from catastrophe and chaos" — perhaps too large an order for a small band of underpaid, underprivileged and outnumbered 'servants in the public good.' Yet the study has real implication for Utilization if compared with some of the findings which are known about the viewing habits of children.

It is at this point that reference to the Nuffield Foundation's *Television and the Child* clearly indicates that progress in the understanding and use of the television medium may be brought into sharp focus. Whereas Allen's subjective treatment and occasional guesswork as to the potential of the medium are sometimes stimulating, the Nuffield Foundation report puts objective bases under the hitherto proposed theory-of-communication-potential of the television medium.<sup>10</sup>

Although the Allen study is based in educational instructional needs which clearly indicate a similarity between those of the military and the civilian, its writer deplores the fact that "... too frequently the Armed Forces will consult with and rely upon the recommendations of a civilian personality [sic], a college president, dean or professor, who has but a vague picture of the actual situation and ramifications of military training requirements."<sup>11</sup>

Since the teaching methodology of military instructors is a result of some 2300 years of traditional classroom evolvement, there may be definitively good reason for the Armed Forces to turn to the so-called "civilian personality," which has proved itself a very "military personality" in time of war. It may be a little too radical a departure to require any democratic peoples to believe that a uniform (civilian tailored) is a criterion for the judgment of instructional need or indeed a criterion for understanding the basic needs which may exist in instructional services, in or out of the armed forces.

*Television, Education and the Armed Forces* is interspersed with broad generalities of alarmist proportions and "loaded" phrases which do not always take into account the awareness that exists among educational televisionists who pursue an objective investigation of the use of the medium to

<sup>10</sup> Hilde T. Himmelweit, A. N. Oppenheim, Pamela Vince, *Television and the Child*, a study sponsored by the Nuffield Foundation, (London: Oxford University Press), 1958.

<sup>11</sup> Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

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Perhaps the most glaring errors of inconsistency and proliferation are manifested in those sections of the study which have to do with "Recommendations," and "Observations." The writer suggests a coordinating agency under a single management which will coordinate the work of agencies concerned with research and investigation. Among the glaring disproved generalities are his recommendation that we do away with "dull teaching personalities," a recommendation which this writer's experience leads him to believe might well be initiated among the instructional ranks of the armed services. The author of the study recommends such overused experimentation as the superimposition for summaries, the use of small rather than large and expensive visuals. He scores the networks' experimentation with educational telecasts, in broad generalities that might well apply to all of the mass media — radio, books, films, newspapers.

Most objectionable in the entire subjective study is the obvious effort to recommend a hypothetical organization, *for which the taxpayer will be charged*, and in which there shall be expensive and ramified experimentation with methodology, techniques, personnel and materiel which have already been experimented with and proved undesirable.

Perhaps the knowledge of the writer of *Television, Education and the Armed Forces* needs updating on what the educational televisionist has already investigated.

## STEVENSON AND HIS AUDIENCE

(Continued from page 14)

cooked, pre-digested, handily packaged foods. Do they want political ideas served in the same fashion? Mr. Stevenson is not the great generalizer; he does not speak in clichés. As a thoughtful man, he has no packaged solutions.

As Robert Lasch, of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, wrote following the 1956 campaign, "It is fashionable to say that . . . (Stevenson) cannot project himself to large audiences. But nobody can establish communication when one end of the line is cut off."<sup>14</sup> Or to use an old figure of Plutarch's,<sup>15</sup> with slight modernization, the audience has some obligation to adapt also, even as one who is to receive a ball from a pitcher does not cup his hands rigidly, in fixed position, but is prepared to adjust to the projection, and asks only that it be in reachable vicinity of the base.

<sup>14</sup> Robert Lasch, "Stevenson," *QJS*, XLIII (February, 1957), 36.  
<sup>15</sup> Plutarch, *Moralia*, "On Listening to Lectures."

## In the Speech Journals

Current issues of the other three regional Speech journals contain many articles of interest to our members. Your editor was particularly impressed by the Autumn, 1959, issue of the *CENTRAL STATES SPEECH JOURNAL*, which may be secured for \$1.50 from Prof. H. L. Ewbanks, Jr., Department of Speech, Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana. The contents of the current issues of our fellow journals are as follows:

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By HAROLD M. KAPLAN, Southern Illinois University. *McGraw-Hill Series in Speech*. 365 pages. \$8.50.

A basic theoretical text limited to a description of the structure and function of that part of the human body which is loosely referred to as the vocal mechanism. Physiologists and other speech workers will find the text suitable for reference. Management and therapy are avoided. The author treats the subject from the viewpoint of the professional physiologist.

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